



Maine Department of Conservation
Natural Areas Program

Loiseleuria procumbens (L.) Desv.

Alpine Azalea

- Habitat:** Peaty or rocky exposed habitats. [Alpine or subalpine (non-forested, upland)]
- Range:** Circumboreal, south to the higher mountains of Maine, New Hampshire, and New York.
- Phenology:** Flowers June - August.
- Family:** Ericaceae

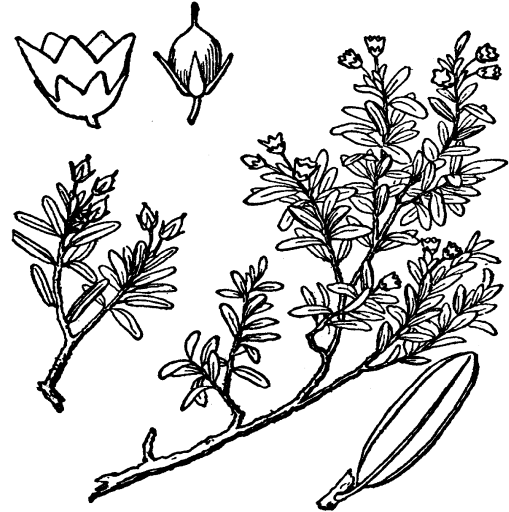


Illustration from Britton & Brown's Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada, 2nd ed.

Aids to Identification: Alpine azalea is a small woody shrub which forms bushy clumps usually no more than 10 cm high. The leaves are opposite, evergreen and leathery, only 5-8 mm long. The pink or white flowers grow in clusters from the upper leaf-axils, are shaped like a crown due to fusion of the lower half of the petals (see illustration), and mature as a 2- or 3-valved capsule.

Ecological characteristics: In Maine this species is found above treeline on Katahdin.

Synonyms: Referred to in some very old treatments as *Chamaecistus procumbens* (L.) Kuntze.

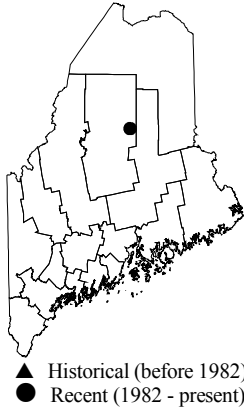
Rarity of *Loiseleuria procumbens*

State Rank:	S1	Critically imperiled in Maine because of extreme rarity or vulnerability to extirpation.
New England Rank:	Division 2	Regionally rare plant: Fewer than 20 current (seen since 1970) occurrences within New England.
Global Rank:	G5	Demonstrably widespread, abundant, and secure globally.

Status of *Loiseleuria procumbens*

Federal Status:	None	No Federal Status.
State Status:	Threatened	Rare and, with further decline, could become endangered; or federally listed as Threatened. Listing criteria met: Special habitat, At edge of range, Vulnerable to human activity

Known Distribution in Maine:



This rare plant has been documented from a total of 1 town(s) in the following county(ies): Piscataquis.

Dates of documented observations are: 1847, 1940, 1953, 1980, 1994, 2000

Reason(s) for rarity:

An arctic species disjunct from its principal range.

Conservation considerations:

Uneducated or unscrupulous people have been known to pluck up alpine azalea plants from Katahdin for alpine gardens; this is illegal, and could be harmful to the population. Wild plants need to be left undisturbed.

The information in this fact sheet was downloaded from the Natural Areas Program's Biological and Conservation Database on 13 MAY 2004. We are grateful to our Botanical Advisory Group for additional information on particular species, and in particular, to Arthur Haines for his assistance with identifying characteristics and taxonomic questions. Nomenclature follows Haines and Vining's *Flora of Maine* (V.F. Thomas Press, 1998); where older works refer to a plant by another name, it is given under "Synonyms". The Natural Areas Program, within the Department of Conservation, maintains the most comprehensive source of information on Maine's rare or endangered plants and rare or exemplary natural communities, and is a member of the Association for Biodiversity Information.

If you know of locations for this plant or would like more information on this species,
please contact the Natural Areas Program
State House Station 93, Augusta, Maine 04333; telephone (207) 287-8044.

